



A FINE AND MONUMENTAL BRONZE CAST OF THE LAOCOON

A monumental Italian patinated-bronze group of the Laocoon

AFTER THE ANTIQUE, CAST BY THE FONDERIA CHIURAZZI, NAPLES, EARLY 20TH

CENTURY

Price realised

USD 262,400

Estimate

USD 120,000 – USD 180,000



Closed: **20 Apr 2006**

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DETAILS



A monumental Italian patinated-bronze group of the Laocoon
After the Antique, Cast by the Fonderia Chiurazzi, Naples, Early 20th Century
Showing Laocoon and his two sons battling serpents, the front with a plaque inscribed
*FONDERIA CHIURAZZI 'LAOCOONTE' COPIA FEDELE DELL' ORIGINALE DEL MUSEO
VATICANO*, and with the founder's mark to the side inscribed *FONDERIA CHIURAZZI NAPOLI*
90 in. (230 cm.) high; 59 in. (150 cm.) wide; 31 in. (80 cm.) deep

EXHIBITED



Piazza Castello, Naples, May-June 2001.

SALE ROOM NOTICE



Please note, the archival image on the right side of the catalogue entry is incorrect. To view the correct image, please contact the department.

Lot Essay

The subject here, Laocoön, was a Trojan priest of Apollo. As related by Virgil, the priest dared

to protest against drawing the wooden horse into the city of Troy, uttering the famous words "Whatever it is, even when Greeks bring gifts I fear them, gifts and all" (Virgil, *The Aeneid*, Book II, 59-70). Hence Laocoön and his two sons were condemned by the anger of the gods to be crushed to death by serpents.

Bought by Pope Julius II (d. 1513) soon after its excavation in 1506, Laocoön was installed in the Belvedere Courtyard of the Musei Vaticani and was later identified by the Pontiff's architect to be the group referred to by Pliny at the Palace of Titus. Since the rediscovery of the original marble, Laocoön has been considered the greatest example of tragic emotion in art, and immediately became one of the main sources of inspiration for Mannerist and Baroque artists and sculptors.

At the time of excavation, Laocoön lacked his right arm, and both his sons lacked their right hands. Though the sons' hands seem to have been restored in marble by 1523, some speculation still remained regarding the intended position of Laocoön's right arm. A terracotta arm extended upwards fixed to the group in the 1530s was said to be modelled by Michelangelo's protégé Montorsoli. However, a copy of the Laocoön by Bartolommeo (Baccio)

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